

Amendments to the Claims

The following Listing of Claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A lithographic method, comprising:
forming a bottom layer and a scanning probe alignment mark on a substrate;
forming a thin film on the bottom layer leaving the scanning probe alignment mark
exposed for interaction with a scanning probe;
aligning a patterned mold with respect to the exposed [[an]] alignment mark ~~disposed~~
~~on a substrate~~ based upon interaction of the exposed alignment mark with a scanning probe
extended toward [[with]] the alignment mark; and
urging the aligned patterned mold into the thin film.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A lithographic method, comprising:
aligning a patterned mold with respect to an alignment mark disposed on a substrate
based upon interaction of a scanning probe with the alignment mark ~~The method of claim 1,~~
wherein the patterned mold is aligned based upon detection of a tunneling current between
the scanning probe and the alignment mark.

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1, wherein the patterned mold is aligned
based upon detection of an interaction force generated between the scanning probe and the
alignment mark.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, further comprising moving the
scanning [[a]] probe near the alignment mark.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method of claim 4, wherein the moving
comprising initially aligning the scanning probe with ~~is moved near~~ the alignment mark by
optical alignment.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of claim 4, further comprising applying a voltage between the scanning probe and the alignment mark to induce a tunneling current between the probe and the alignment mark.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of claim 4, wherein the scanning probe has a fixed spatial position relative to the patterned mold.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method of claim 4, wherein the scanning probe is carried on the patterned mold.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, further comprising:
after urging the aligned patterned mold into the thin [[a]] film, removing the patterned mold from the thin film, whereby disposed on the substrate to transfer a relief pattern is transferred to the thin film.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method of claim 9, further comprising removing exposing thinned regions of the transferred relief pattern to expose underlying regions of the bottom layer.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): A device formed by the lithographic method of claim 1.

Claims 12-21 (canceled)

Claim 22 (new): The method of claim 1, further comprising retracting the extended scanning probe before the aligned patterned mold is urged into the thin film.

Claim 23 (new): The method of claim 1, wherein the aligning comprises detecting a tunneling current between the scanning probe and the alignment mark.

Claim 24 (new): The method of claim 9, further comprising:
after removing the patterned mold, depositing a material over the substrate and patterning the deposited material by lift-off processing of the thin film.

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Claim 25 (new): The method of claim 9, further comprising:
after removing the patterned mold, transferring the relief pattern in the thin film to the
bottom layer.